

Chapter 7

PARKS & RECREATION





PARKS & RECREATION—Chapter 7

INTRODUCTION

Creating a healthy social fabric is a vital component in any town. Park systems and recreation programs are a tangible way for citizens to experience leisure time in the community. In Sequim, residents gather for many festivals and events in Carrie Blake Park, the City's Community Park. Neighborhood Parks are well attended by many people playing and socializing. These parks are within walking distance of home and allow "small-town" and "friendly" interaction amongst residents. These are the places where children gather to run freely or throw a ball around with friends. Pocket parks and plazas are smaller public places where residents and visitors experience leisure activities – these are located throughout the community and offer an array of activities from child-play on fixed equipment to organic gardening. Plazas provide settings for relaxation or to enjoy events such as the Farmer's Market in the urban center. All of these park types allow residents to freely mingle and have friendly, chance interactions. These encounters are important to the community because they connect people and create a sense of belonging.



Pioneer Memorial Park.

The City of Sequim is dedicated to making sure there is availability and access to parks, recreation opportunities and leisure opportunities that exist for its residents and visitors. These opportunities are provided, in most cases, through the active and passive recreation sites, facilities and programs within Sequim's park system, and its recreation programs. The City is also dedicated to partnerships with other public and

service organizations to pool resources and provide a variety of opportunities to the community. Leisure services and parks are important for providing healthy alternatives for citizens to recreate in the community.

Park systems and recreation programs are a tangible way for citizens to experience leisure time in the community.

Local opportunities tend to be service- and facility-driven (e.g., recreation programming, ball fields, courts, trails and paths). Efforts important to the priorities of local government include providing close-to-home recreation opportunities, supporting public health through facilities that encourage physical activities, and providing facilities that encourage personal mobility. Local sidewalks, streets, and roads are important for walking, jogging, and bicycling.

Park and trail acquisition and park design and use is a way for the City to demonstrate conservation of natural resources and to educate the public about the environment. Shared easements for trail development and demonstration projects such as the Water Reuse Demonstration Park provide environmental connection links to the ecosystem and the delivery of services.

To evaluate the need for City parks, recreation opportunities and leisure amenities spatially and to assist in the effort to assure equitable availability of parks and recreation facilities is available to all Sequim residents who live in different parts of the City, the map on the following page (Figure 7.A) has been created to show deficiencies in access to parks and recreation opportunities.

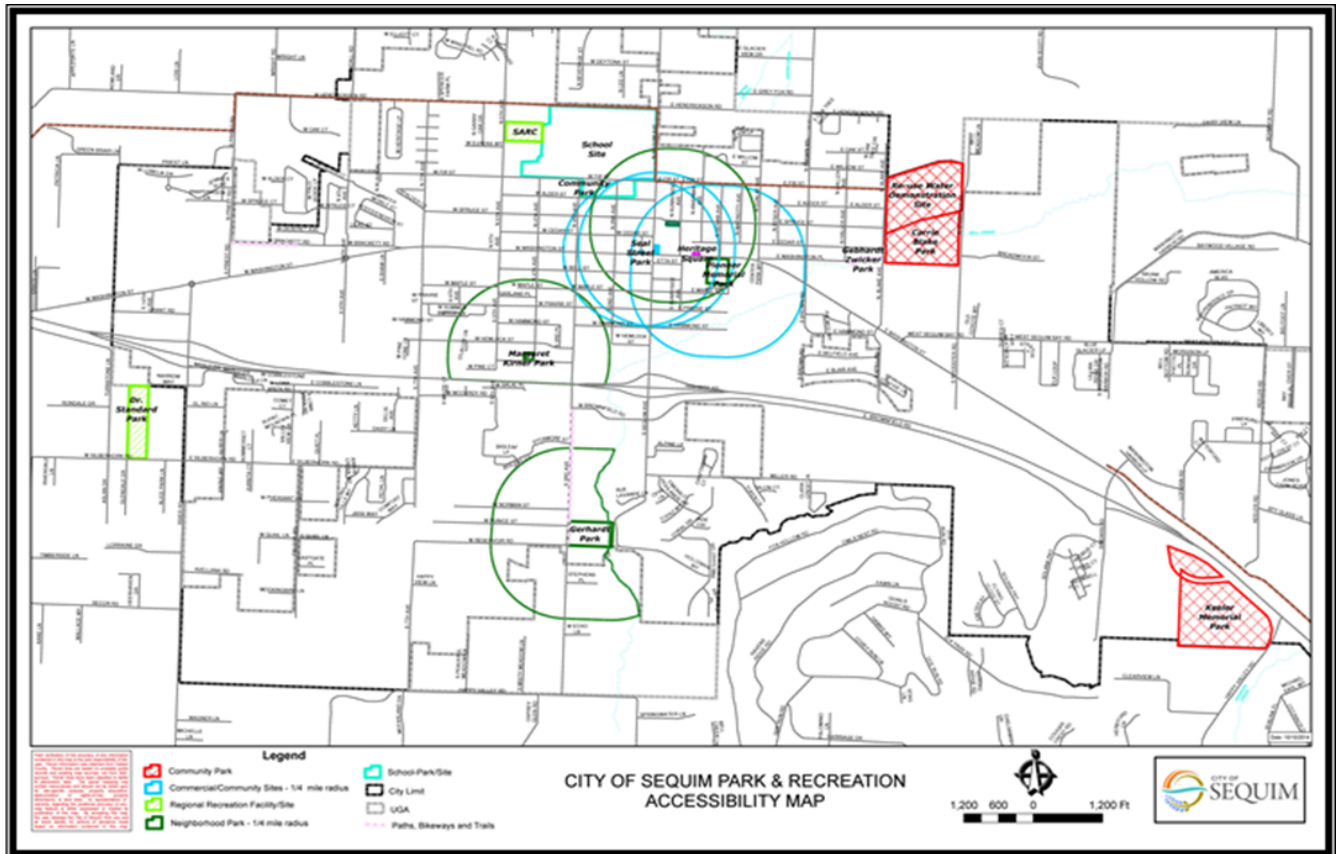


Figure 7.A Accessibility Map

VISION

Parts of the Vision guide development of the city's PARKS AND RECREATION system and facilities:

The Sequim 120 Vision Statement directed by the community desires are reflected in the comprehensive plan elements throughout. Of the 13 bulleted vision statement points, the following relate the most to the parks and recreation goals and policies:

- undeveloped residential lands will infill to strengthen neighborhoods by enhancing safety, creating more livable streets, providing opportunities for mutual support, and promoting a social fabric where "small-town friendliness" is experienced every day;
- the community's image and identity will be promoted by active management and responsible stewardship of both the human-built and natural environments;
- Sequim's role as a major steward and purveyor of finite natural resources in the Valley will be reflected in a pattern of growth that promotes efficiency in resource utilization and sustainable resource management.

PARK TYPES

PR GOAL 7.1 TYPES OF PARKS: Recognize that parks serve different functions depending on location, size, and amenities.

POLICIES

PR 7.1.1 COMMUNITY PARKS

Program and improve Sequim's Community Parks to serve the greater Sequim-Dungeness Valley as a regional draw for recreation and park activities.



Carrie Blake Park is a Community Park that serves the greater Sequim-Dungeness Valley.

Discussion: Community parks are large parks, between 20 and 100 acres serving up to 30,000 people, essentially the population of the entire valley in 2015. Although in some cases community parks can be smaller if proposed for a community wide use such as Dr. Standard Park. Typically, community parks are located on arterials or major collector streets and are venues for large sporting events, community events, concerts. Many different uses are often found in these parks. Examples of community park uses include: soccer and baseball fields, amphitheaters, playgrounds, tennis courts, pickleball courts, basketball courts, volleyball courts, internal trail systems, gardens, picnic areas, ponds, disc golf courses, picnic shelters, community centers and dog parks.

Carrie Blake Park is Sequim's community park. Major events draw people from all over the region. Serving well beyond the capacity, it is a great example of a community park with multiple types of activities both passive and active including trails, shelters, sitting areas, ponds, soccer fields, playgrounds, skate park, BMX track, picnic shelters and Guy Cole Center serve a wide range of park patrons. Large open areas and passive open space opportunities with parking accommodations help to facilitate special events. The low-density neighborhood surrounding Carrie Blake Park uses the park for the local neighborhood. (Figure 7.B on page 7)

PR 7.1.2 NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS

Locate additional neighborhood parks within walking distance of existing and proposed neighborhoods with passive and informal active open space.

Discussion: Neighborhood parks are typically between three and ten acres and serve the surrounding low-density neighborhoods of around 3-5,000 people. These parks are within walking distance of neighborhood homes and provide an informal gathering space for nearby residents. They attract users from inside the neighborhood with a few amenities such as playground equipment, seating areas, picnic areas, open space, court games, community gardens and walking trails. These parks are not meant to act as a regional draw.

A few of Sequim's neighborhood parks include Margaret Kirner Park and Gerhardt Park. Others are needed to serve new neighborhoods as Sequim experiences growth. As new schools are proposed, partnerships with the Sequim School District can fill the

void with neighborhood parks and play areas for the schools created on a common site. Agreements concerning park use, management, maintenance, and equipment replacement provide the legal framework to forge these partnerships.



Margaret Kirner Park is an example of a neighborhood park.

PR 7.1.3 SMALL AND SPECIAL USE PARKS

Integrate small, special use parks that serve residents within a quarter mile radius and visitors to Downtown into the City's urban fabric to meet specific open space needs such as providing respite, play for children, and specialized activities for all ages.

Discussion: Pocket-parks / mini-parks / tot-lots / community gardens are public spaces of a few hundred square feet to an acre or two that provide limited, special activities for local residents. Within residential neighborhoods, these parks are usually passive, serving the surrounding neighborhood population of several hundred houses. In commercial or business areas, they are sitting areas for people-watching, having a casual meal, or maybe even en-



Seal Street Park in Downtown Sequim.

gaging in a game of checkers.

Sequim has small special use parks in neighborhoods and in Downtown. Mary Kirner Park is at the edge of the Central Neighborhood, and Centennial Place, June Robinson Memorial Park, Heritage Park and Seal Street Park – all within Downtown – offer a place to rest and meet a friend before visiting one of

PR 7.1.4 PLAYFIELDS

Provide facilities for youth and adult organized team sports that serve the community, Valley and region.

Discussion: Dr. Standard Park and Haller Playfields are city facilities that are the primary venues of organized sports. They serve city residents and valley residents and teams that visit from the broader region.



The annual Dungeness Cup Youth Soccer tournament brings teams from throughout western Washington to play on the Albert Haller Playfields.

PR 7.1.5 PATHS AND TRAILS

Connect the community to nature and parks and open spaces through a system of regional and local trails and paths for walking and bicycling.

Discussion: Although not technically a Sequim City Park, the Olympic Discovery Trail passes through the city limits and some city parks. The Olympic Discovery Trail is intended to eventually connect Sequim



with the West end of Clallam County — an idea that grew from the creation of the Peninsula Trails Coalition that formed in 1987. To date, the Peninsula Trails Coalition continues to spearhead the construction and maintenance of the trail system. A 2011 Parks and Recreation Needs Assessment Survey designed to gather data from households within the Sequim School District found 75 percent of households have a need for walking, hiking and biking trails, which ranked the highest among alternative needs, such as additional large city parks or beach areas. The same survey concluded within a year-long period 63 percent of households used the Olympic Discovery Trail. Upon completion, the Olympic Discovery

Trail is planned to have alternative routes through the city limits with a shopping route, a shortcut or a more leisurely route. There is a newly built kiosk constructed by local Eagle Scout Brandon Grow at the corner of North Rhodfer Road and East Washington Street which provides trail information directing trail users through the city limits.

As a long-term trail development strategy, routes that connect neighborhood and community parks are desired as ways to expand leisure walking / bicycling experiences within the city as well as to create fixed routes to connect residents to their local park. These become part of the neighborhood fabric to create social opportunities as well as add to mobility options.

TYPES OF CITY PARK FACILITIES—FIGURE 7.B

PARK CATEGORY		WHO SERVED	SIZE (ACRES)	ACTIVITIES	LOCATION
Community		All regional demographics (5-30,000 people)	20+	Active / passive rec.; team sports; events	Central to region service area (City, Valley and visitors)
Carrie Blake		S-D Valley; region	22	Multi-purpose; community events	Central
Re-Use Site		S-D Valley; region; tourism	29	Environmental stewardship; community events	Central
Keeler Park		S-D Valley	43	Open space; meet future demand	Southeast
Neighborhood		Residents within ½ to 1 mile radius	3 to 15	Unorganized sports; family play; passive	Central to neighborhood accessibility
Pioneer Park		Downtown; visitors	4	Passive open space; small community events	Center of Downtown
Gerhardt Park		SW neighborhood; 3-5,000 residents	7	Active and passive recreation	South-southwest
Joint-Use with New Schools		SE and SW neighborhoods	(future)	Shared playground / sports fields	Co-located with future elementary schools

Special (tot-lot; mini-park; garden plot)		Nearby residents and / or visitors	Urban lot to an acre	Rest / relax; urban garden; child play; events	Small parcels of opportunity to serve immediate area
Heritage Park		Downtown; visitors	2,000sf	Relax	Downtown edge
Seal Street		Downtown; visitors	1,000sf	Relax	Downtown Core
Centennial Place		Downtown; visitors	0.20	Relax; weekly market	Downtown Core
Mary Kirner		S Central neighborhood	0.45	Active child play	Central edge
June Robinson		N Central neighborhood	0.25	Urban garden	Downtown Core
Major Sports Fields		Community and region	Varies		Large parcels of opportunity
Dr. Standard Park		Community and region	21.5	Organized team sports	West edge
Haller Playfields		Community, region, tourism	15	Organized team sports	Central
Trails and Paths		Community, region, and tourism	Vary in length	Passive recreation; leisure	Connections among parks; access to nature
Olympic Discovery Trail		Regional population and visitors	26 miles (5 in city)	Bicycling, walking, nature	Cross-city, continued east and west

ACTIVITIES IN PARKS

PR GOAL 7.2 ACTIVITIES IN PARKS: Create parks that provide multiple activities to attract resident to parks.

POLICIES

PR 7.2.1 PARKS AND NEIGHBORHOOD

Create new and maintain existing green spaces and parks in the Living District, Downtown District, and low density neighborhoods as gathering places for local residents to recreate and socialize.

Discussion: Residents and visitors gather in parks

and neighborhood open spaces to interact with others in the community. Safety is a quality of life factor that allows people to network and experience parks, neighborhoods and each other. As the community grows and new neighborhoods build up, provide neighborhood parks that serve the residents of new developments (e.g., density bonuses, mitigation land

banking, and creative right-of-way use). Development incentives in downtown zones encourage developers to provide pocket parks, plazas, courtyards, arcades, atriums, pedestrian corridors, and through-block corridors; this is a regulatory tool that can be applied in other commercial districts as well.

The city's limited staff resources rely on partnership / volunteer stewardship programs utilizing local service clubs and organizations to watch parks and work with public safety officials to keep parks safe. As parks are redesigned and new parks are added, design for safety is enhanced by consulting public safety officials and utilizing crime prevention through environmental design (CPTED) principles and standards.

The social fabric of the community is strengthened providing benefits beyond the initial intent of the program or event.

These parks and recreation opportunities are offered through the City but also through other public and private providers. Of the public providers, the City of Sequim, the Boys and Girls Club, Shipley Center, Sequim Aquatics and Recreation Center (SARC) and Olympic Medical Center (OMC) work together to provide health, wellness and enrichment opportunities in Sequim. Partnerships between these organizations reach more people and pool resources to serve the community in a more sustainable manner.

PR 7.2.2 PARTICIPATION AND PARTNERSHIP

Encourage participation in parks and recreation programs and special events to build social capital and serve as the backbone of a strong, engaged community.

Discussion: Opportunities to participate in recreation programs and special events offer healthy and enriching options to Sequim residents. The quality of life of citizens is increased when they interact and experience “small-town” and “friendly” situations. The social fabric of the community is strengthened providing benefits beyond the initial intent of the program or event.



Sequim celebrates its Centennial with an Old Fashioned 4th of July Picnic at Carrie Blake Park in 2013.

PR 7.2.3 ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

Provide affordable programs for disenfranchised youth and offer assistance to those in need so they may experience recreational opportunities in Sequim through scholarship and other assistance programs.

Discussion: Among the core purposes of a public parks system is to provide affordable and accessible recreation opportunities for residents of all income levels. Financing assistance for some programs may be necessary for some residents living on a limited income. Through partnerships, donations, and grants, services may be extended to those in need.

PARK ACCESS AND CONNECTIVITY

PR GOAL 7.3 PARK ACCESS AND CONNECTIVITY: Integrate a compact, interconnected urban park system to define the shape and feel of a city and its neighborhoods.

POLICIES

PR 7.3.1 CONNECT CITIZENS THROUGH PARKS & RECREATION

Foster a sense of community and improve the quality of life through a parks and recreation system that connects and engages the citizens.

Discussion: Parks offer neighbors, residents and visitors a place to gather and interact within the community. Recreation programs provide connections and a reason for being in one location together. To experience a “small-town and friendly” community, the opportunity for interaction must occur. Planned events, classes along with the venue are ideal for initiating activities that build community.

PR 7.3.2 CONNECTED SYSTEM OF PARKS & RECREATION FACILITIES

Maintain and extend a balanced, well-connected system of parks and recreation facilities that are linked to all modes of travel.

Discussion: Sequim’s urban parks include parkland, plazas, greenways, landscaped boulevards and civic spaces. These define the community layout, traffic flow, public events and the civic culture. Parks help connect people and neighborhoods while providing opportunities for exercise and enhancing emotional well-being by bringing nature “close to home.” A well-designed parks system protects the natural environment, provides a range of recreation opportunities, and is integrated with the non-motorized component of the Transportation Element. Bike trails and walking paths that link neighborhoods, parks, and open spaces not only

provide recreation, they also offer access to schools, shoreline access areas, mixed use centers and employment centers. Building upon the and linking to the Olympic Discovery Trail will help to connect the wide ranging areas of the city as part of a citywide trail and path system in the *Layered Network*.



The Olympic Discovery Trail is an important building block of a Layered Network.

Public open spaces and trails are acquired and developed within the financial capabilities and level of service standards of the Capital Facilities Element. Land for open spaces and trails is obtained through municipal or state programs, such as stormwater management and wildlife /wetland protection. Grants from public agencies and private foundations are primary sources to acquire land for open spaces and trails. Nonprofit special interest groups, such as the North Olympic Land Trust, also obtain conservation easements and create incentives for open space and trails system development that benefit the city. Development of non-park infrastructure such as utility corridors may also allow shared easements with public or private utility providers to add to the trail system where land may otherwise not be available.

PR 7.3.3 CONNECTED PARKS & RECREATION SYSTEM

Shape a connected parks and recreation system to build a sense of community and improve quality of life for all of Sequim’s residents.

Discussion: The needs of Sequim’s residents are broad in scope from community and neighborhood parks for children to run and play to small pocket parks for seniors to gather for a game of chess. The parks and recreation system connects and serves all and to address the community's needs for active and passive recreation opportunities. Recreation programs benefit the whole of the community and are comprehensive, enriching, and affordable for all citizens. These programs provide fitness opportunities for a diverse population. The physical structure of the parks system connects people on trails and provides parks within walking distance (see UG policy 2.1.2).

PR 7.3.4 CONNECTED SYSTEMS

Link parks, greenways, and other natural or restored lands to create an interconnected green-space system providing benefits for people, wildlife, and the economy.

Discussion: An example of facility integration that links open space and a trail is the route of the Olympic Discovery Trail that passes through Carrie Blake Park, River Bridge Park and others. These connected systems of greenways, paved and unpaved trails provide options for commuting, gaining access to neighborhoods, making wildlife path connections, connecting habitat through town to the outskirts, and bringing people to nature. New connections to implement the Bicycle element of the Layered Network (Fig. 4.E) are established as development occurs. Land donations, purchases, recreation easements and shared easements with other utilities (both public and private) are approaches to acquire property for the open space and trail networks. Well-linked trail systems provide a higher quality-of-life amenity for the citizens, adding social and economic value to the community.

FUNDING PARKS

PR GOAL 7.4 FUNDING PARKS : Provide park facilities to meet the needs and enhance the quality of life experience for residents today and into the future.

POLICIES

PR 7.4.1 METROPOLITAN PARKS DISTRICT

Establish an equitable funding and management system for all local and regional parks, recreation, and open space facilities and programs in the city and surrounding Valley to best meet the common recreation needs of the region.

Discussion: One of the most-utilized approaches to fund parks and recreation services / facilities to satisfy regional demand is a taxing mechanism enabled in

Washington State law called a “metropolitan parks district (MPD).” An MPD’s geographic extent may be limited to the city’s boundaries or may encompass several jurisdictional boundaries and include more than one city and/or county. An MPD has the authority to acquire, manage, conserve and develop (for certain purposes) lands within the defined park area. To accomplish these goals, the district may levy property taxes, acquire matching grants, participate in development impact fees and real estate excise taxes, issue bonds and accept monetary and land donations. A

MPD can also implement a fee structure for services provided.

Although Sequim is a fraction of the total Valley population (less than 25% in 2015), it hosts some of the most-used parks and recreation facilities in the area – these are used by Valley residents as they are by city residents. Most of these “regional-serving” venues are city facilities such as the Water Reuse and Carrie Blake parks, but at least one, the Sequim Aquatic and Recreation Center, is not. The Olympic Discovery Trail represents a third arrangement – it runs through multiple jurisdictions and its improvement and maintenance are shared by all.

An MPD that broadly covers the entire Valley spreads funding support for parks and recreation facilities and operations among the general population that uses city and non-city facilities. It operates as a junior taxing district with the same boundaries as the Sequim School District. Similarly, the relationship between shared costs and benefits is similar to the school district – while not everyone uses parks and recreation facilities every day, at various times in a lifetime, they do. Developing and maintaining these types of uses accessible to the general public is an investment in community that is shared by all, as everyone benefits at some time.

PR 7.3.2 PARK IMPACT FEES

Maintain a park impact fee system to help pay for the additional parks and open spaces to accommodate the needs of future residents.

Discussion: Parks impact fees pay to develop parks and park facilities for today’s citizens into the future. The impact fees are collected when properties develop or when the land use changes and impact fees have not previously been collected. These fees assist in the acquisition and development of parks that are built to accommodate growing demand for recreation as the community expands and the population increases.



Park impact fees provide a source of funding for parks and park facilities.

PR 7.4.3 TRAIL EASEMENTS

Seek opportunities to acquire access easements for trails that make connections to other trail segments or extend existing routes to system nodes.

Discussion: Access easements for establishing trails and access to parks are a high priority when large project developments occur, either as an offset to development impacts (e.g., for increased residential demand for trails) or to access commercial development incentives. These easements are agreed to by the property owner or dedicated on plats for new development. The City is responsible for maintaining the trail and the area on either side of the trail.

PR 7.4.4 DEDICATION OF PARK LAND

Dedicate active and passive park land as residential development projects are approved.

Discussion: As new properties develop, the dedication of park open space within subdivisions adds open space and recreational amenities for residents in the neighborhood. These projects support activity needs of residents young and old.

PR 7.4.5 GIFTS OF LAND AND FACILITIES

Encourage the gifting of park land and accessories to subsidize the cost of park maintenance and development.

Discussion: Examples of gifts that contribute to the Parks system include Gerhardt Park, Work within the community to acquire desired park land and park accessories. A gift of other land may be accepted by the City and used in a land swap option to develop parks in a better location. Accessories can be features such as lighting, tables and benches, or play equipment.



The City cuts the ribbon on a new pathway along Gerhardt park.

PR 7.4.6 SUBDIVISION LAND SET ASIDE

Encourage the development community to avoid small unusable tracts or pieces of land for individual neighborhood parks and implement a strategy to coordinate larger neighborhood parks.

Discussion: Requiring developers to set aside a percentage of land as part of a subdivision seldom produces land that provides meaningful recreation. Instead, the community inherits a tract of land that isn't used and no one wants to care for. Incremental accumulation of park impact fees with each new development to acquire appropriately-sized parks in the right location is a better approach to meeting increased park demands.

Figure 7.C on the following page illustrates a comprehensive list of available funding options for Parks and Recreation facility developments.

PR 7.4.7 SIX-YEAR PARKS AND RECREATION C.I.P

Establish an ongoing six-year Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) for parks and recreation facilities to bring increased focus on projects and funding to meet planned near-term needs.

Discussion: Capital Improvement Planning and the Parks and Recreation Master Plan address the issue related to the pursuit of leisure activities and the preservation of open space, habitat and the natural environment are essential to the quality of life enjoyed by Sequim residents and visitors. When the City Council adopted the Sequim Parks and Recreation Master Plan in 2015, it expressed as policy the community's objectives and priorities for the provision of parks and recreation space, and the capital investments needed to maintain those assets. The Parks and Recreation Master Plan outlines recommendations and guidelines for the acquisition, development, management, and funding of public parks and recreation facilities in the City's neighborhoods. The Parks and Recreational Facility Funding Policy states the City should strive to develop the broad range of recreational facilities. (Figure 7.C)

The City's capital improvement program (CIP), as it relates to it's Parks and Recreation Master Plan, is a list of proposed major improvements over the next six years. These improvements are arranged in order of preference to assure that they are carried out in priority and in accord with the City's ability to pay.



The City gathers valuable input on how citizens use City Parks.

Local Funding Programs	Capital Projects	Operations and Maintenance
General Fund Property Tax Sales Tax Interfund Transfer	✓	✓
Reserves	✓	✓
Real Estate Excise Tax (1/2 annual REET)	✓	
General Obligation Bonds (voter approved)	✓	
Limited Tax Obligation Bonds (Councilmanic, non-voter approved)	✓	
Revenue Bonds	✓	
Impact Fees	✓	
Donation	✓	✓
Park Districts	✓	✓
User Fees	✓	✓
Joint Development	✓	✓
Joint Use	✓	✓
Philanthropy	✓	✓
Haller Park Fund	✓	✓

State Funding Programs	Capital Projects	Operations and Maintenance
Boating Facilities Program (BFP)	✓	
Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program (WWRP)	✓	
Aquatic Land Enhancements (ALEA)	✓	
Coastal Zones Management Fund	✓	
Other State Funding Programs as they become enacted	✓	✓

Federal Funding Programs	Capital Projects	Operations and Maintenance
Land and Water Conservation Fund	✓	
US Army Corps of Engineers Section 1135	✓	
Other Federal Funding Programs as they become enacted	✓	✓

Figure 7.C

SUSTAINABLE PARKS

PR GOAL 7.5 SUSTAINABLE PARKS : Implement “green infrastructure” into park sites, buildings and facilities to conserve money, natural ecosystem values and functions.

POLICIES

PR 7.5.1 ENERGY USE IN PARKS

Practice energy conservation and utilize high-efficiency lighting and heating/cooling systems in City facilities to contribute to the financial and environmental health of Sequim.

Discussion: Parks are among the most valued public assets, but the cost of operating them is high compared to the revenues they generate. One way to offset costs is to apply energy conservation practices such as using solar power, buying energy-efficient equipment and appliances, and using reclaimed water and recycled building materials. The city is committed to evaluate existing systems and processes to best manage resources in the future. Some energy-efficient products are more expensive than the less efficient option – it is important to know the life-cycle of the products and equipment to evaluate the true efficiency and cost savings compared to less costly alternatives that are also less efficient. Reviewing the triple bottom line, the environmental, social and economic effects, instead of solely the economic bottom line may also lead the City to make decisions that better serve the public over time. Grants and other aid may be available to assist with the funding for these upgrades.

PR 7.5.2 NATURE IN MIND IN PARK DESIGN

Locate trails and open spaces in places that are mutually beneficial to the community for conserving nature and protecting environmentally sensitive areas.

Discussion: Trails are highly valued in areas that are important to preserve as open spaces such as wooded

areas, drainage corridors, shorelines, scenic vistas, and other natural settings. Trails located along drainage corridors do not degrade the environmental functions and values of the area. Wetlands, drainage corridors and other areas that provide essential habitat for priority plant or wildlife species as passive open space are areas to designate and preserve. The Johnson Creek corridor and the Bell Creek corridor are two examples of environmentally sensitive areas that need this type of attention.



Multiple functions within the open space and trails system, including: stormwater management; viewpoints; protection of cultural resources; wildlife habitat; and passive recreation. The location, design, construction and management of park and recreation facilities are expected to be compatible with natural features (e.g., soils, geology, topography, and shorelines) and cultural resources.

PR 7.5.3 MANAGEMENT, MAINTENANCE AND OPERATIONS

Maintain and operate parks and their costs which vary widely depending on the type of facility (e.g., natural open space parks with limited trails are likely to require significantly less maintenance than an athletic field with associated restrooms) in a thoughtful and equitable manner.

Discussion: Another key consideration in future fa-

cilities planning is the community's ability to maintain parks. Staff relies on volunteers for help with respect to weeding, bridge maintenance and picking up litter. Routine maintenance efforts are falling behind.

The City should assess resources needed to manage and maintain park and recreation operations. This should include an evaluation of the current organization structure, staffing and outside contracting services. In addition, the development of clear and concise written management policy, procedures and prac-

PARKS AND ECONOMIC VITALITY

PR GOAL 7.6 PARKS AND ECONOMIC VITATLITY: Continue to utilize parks as and indicator for creating positive economic benefits.

POLICIES

PR 7.6.1 PARKS & TOURISM

Recognize the significance of parks and recreation programs in Sequim as an "engine" that drives tourism through access to unique features, programs and experiences such as special events and festivals.



Sports tournaments can be an important economic driver by bringing players and families to the City.

Discussion: The economic benefits to the community as a whole with an increase in overnight stays, shopping and dining in Sequim for festivals and events such as the Lavender Festival add significantly to the economy. Other visitors are drawn to Sequim through the regional appeal of the Olympic Peninsula. Soccer tournaments and other regional events draw visitors into Sequim as well. The continued marketing of Sequim and events to tourists drawn to the Olympic Peninsula enhances the success of these events and attracts more people to spend money locally. The overall economic benefits to the community warrant continued support for programs, special events and parks facilities.

PR 7.6.2 PARKS AS ECONOMIC INVESTMENTS

Develop recreation facilities that provide sites for special events, sports tournaments and athletic events, which can be major sources of tourism and an economic benefit to the City of Sequim.

Discussion: Sequim’s planned expansion of new park and recreation facilities including interpretive opportunities creates significant value to tourism and economic benefit to the community. The community’s profile and identity are enhanced by incorporating significant cultural resources in the design and development of these new facilities.

PR 7.6.3 PARKS & PROPERTY VALUES

Recognize that parks, recreation and leisure amenities enhance property values and attract homebuyers, families, workers, and retirees.

Discussion: Properties located near desirable public parks can increase the value of nearby homes by 8% to 20%. Recreation and leisure amenities add to the quality of life of a community and draws new residents. Sequim is a marketable community with many amenities. As it grows, the quality and location of parks as well as the leisure services available continues to be an important factor in defining Sequim as a quality community.

PARKS AND RECREATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS

PR GOAL 7.7 PARKS AND RECREATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS: Share parks and recreational opportunities by coordinating with County, State, Tribes, Port, Sequim School District, Sequim Aquatic and Recreation Center (SARC), private individuals and other entities.

POLICIES

PR 7.7.1 PARTNERSHIPS FOR PLAY

Continue partnerships of parks and recreation services to serve Sequim and the commitment to the greater region.

Discussion: Increasing shared use of school buildings and grounds as places for public recreational after school and on evenings adds value to these facilities as public assets. Joint use agreements that share the costs and benefits of scheduled usage, management, and maintenance of facilities are cost-saving measures as there is less duplication of operation of public facilities. The use of City of Sequim Parks and Recreation facilities and services by other public entities is inherent to the practice of working in partnership with other community organizations.